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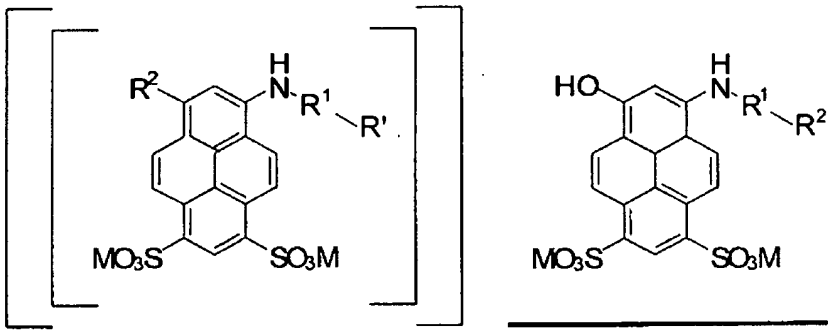
In the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

1 (Currently amended). A fluorescent compound of the general structure:



where ~~R^2 = OH, NH_2, SO_3 or $SH(NH_2)_2$;~~

M is one of the alkali metals (Li, Na, K), ammonium (NH4) , or pyridinium (Py),

R^1 is a spacer comprised of 2 to 20 carbon, oxygen or nitrogen atoms, with the carbon containing sequences chosen from alkyl, alkenyl, arylalkyl, or alkoxy groups, which can bear any of several substitutions along the carbon chain, including but not limited to amino, carbonyl, carboxyl, hydroxyl, sulfonyl, sulfonamide, oxyethylene, ethylene oxide, or hydroxyl moieties,

and,

[[R']] $\underline{R^2}$ = <u>-COOH, -SH, $-NH_2$, -NCS, -NCO, $-CO_2NHS$, $NHNH_2$, -Maleimide, or Hydrazine</u>~~a terminal carboxyl, amino, sulfhydryl or biotinyl group~~.

2 (Currently amended). The compound, according to claim 1, wherein:

$R^1 = CO-(CH_2)n$ where n = 1-15, and

R^2 = -COOH, -SH, $-NH_2$, -NCS, <u>-NCO,</u> ~~$-CO_2$, NHS,~~ <u>$-CO_2NHS$,</u> -Maleimide, or Hydrazine.

3 (Currently amended). The compound, according to claim 1, wherein:

R^1 = - CO- PEG ~~where n = 1-15~~, and where

R^2 = -COOH, -SH, $-NH_2$, -NCS, -NCO, ~~$-CO_2$, -NHS,~~ $-CO_2NHS$,

-Maleimide or Hydrazide.

4 (Currently amended). The compound, according to claim 1, wherein:

R^1 = - CO- DEXTRAN and where

R^2 = -COOH, -SH, $-NH_2$, -NCS, -NCO, ~~$-CO_2$, -NHS,~~ $-CO_2NHS$,

-Maleimide or Hydrazide.

5 (Currently amended). The compound, according to claim 1, wherein:

$R^1 = CO(CH_2)_n\text{-}(CONHCHCONH)_N$ where R = Alkyl, Aryl, [[n]] N = 1-100,
|
R

n = 1-15, and

R^2 = -COOH, -SH, $-NH_2$, -NCS, -NCO, ~~$-CO_2$, -NHS,~~ $-CO_2NHS$,

-Maleimide, or Hydrazine.

6 (Currently amended). The compound, according to claim 1, wherein:

R^1 = -CO-Aryl-$(CH_2)_n$ where n = 1-15 and where

R^2 = -COOH, -SH, $-NH_2$, -NCS, -NCO, ~~$-CO_2$, -NHS,~~ $-CO_2NHS$,

-Maleimide, or Hydrazine.

7 (Currently amended). The compound, according to claim 1, wherein:

$R^1 = CO(CH_2)_n\text{-}CONH\text{-}(CH2)_N$ - , where n = 1-15, N = 1-15, and where

R^2 = -SH, $-NH_2$, -NCS, -NCO, -Maleimide, or $-NHNH_2$,

8 (Original). The compound, according to claim 1, wherein:

$R^1 = CO(CH_2)_n$-CONH-PEG, where n = 1-15 and

R^2 = -SH, -NH_2, -NCS, -NCO, -Maleimide, or -$NHNH_2$.

9 (Original). The compound, according to claim 1, wherein:

$R^1 = CO(CH_2)_n$-CONH-DEXTRAN , where n = 1-15 and

R^2 = -SH, -NH_2, -NCS, -NCO, -Maleimide, or -$NHNH_2$.

10 (Currently amended). The compound, according to claim 1, wherein:

R^1 = CH2-$(CH_2)_n$-CONH-X, where n = 1-15, and where

X = $(CH2)_n$, n = 1-15

~~= PEG~~

~~= DEXTRAN~~

and R^2 = -SH, -NH_2, -NCS, -NCO, -Maleimide, -CO_2NHS, or -$NHNH_2$.

11 (Currently amended). The compound, according to claim 1, wherein:

R^1 = CH2-$(CH_2)_n$, where n = 1-15 and

R^2 = -SH, -NH_2, -NCS, -NCO, -Maleimide, or –CO_2NHS~~, or -$NHNH_2$~~.

12 (Original). The compound, according to claim 1, wherein:

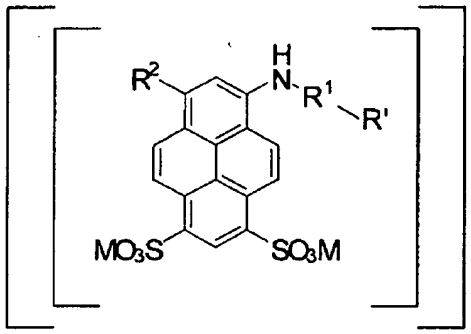
R^1 = C_nH_{n+2} , where n = 1-15 and

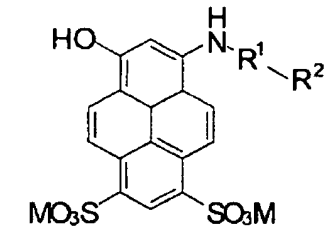
R^2 = -SH, -NH_2, -NCS, -NCO, -Maleimide, or –CO_2NHS.

13 - 62 (Canceled).

63 (Currently amended). A method for detecting biomolecules comprising:

a) providing a fluorescent compound of the general structure





where ~~R^2 = OH, NH_2, SO_3, or $SH(NH_2)_2$;~~

M is one of the alkali metals (Li, Na, K), ammonium (NH4) , or pyridinium (Py),

R^1 is a spacer comprised of 2 to 20 carbon, oxygen or nitrogen atoms, with the carbon containing sequences chosen from alkyl, alkenyl, arylalkyl, or alkoxy groups, which can bear any of several substitutions along the carbon chain, including but not limited to amino, carbonyl, carboxyl, hydroxyl, sulfonyl, sulfonamide, oxyethylene, ethylene oxide, or hydroxyl moieties,

and,

[[R']] $\underline{R^2}$ = <u>-COOH, -SH, $-NH_2$, -NCS, -NCO, $-CO_2$-NHS, $NHNH_2$, -Maleimide, or Hydrazine</u>~~a terminal carboxyl, amino, sulfhydryl or biotinyl group; and~~

b) detecting the presence or absence of a fluorescence signal.

64 (Original). The method, according to claim 63, for use in the labeling of amino or carboxyl groups proteins and peptides.

65 (Original). The method, according to claim 63, for use in the labeling of sulfhydryl groups on proteins and peptides.

66 (Original). The method, according to claim 63, for use in the labeling of oligonucleotides at the 3' or 5' terminus.

67 (Original). The method, according to claim 63, for use in the labeling nucleoside bases in oligonucleotides during chemical synthesis or by random priming.

68 (Original). The method, according to claim 63, for use in the labeling nucleoside bases in oligonucleotides during reverse transcription/PCR or PCR.

69 (Original). The method, according to claim 63, for use in the labeling of any antigen specific polyclonal or monoclonal IgG.

70 (Original). The method, according to claim 63, further comprising the step of conjugating avidin or streptavidin to the fluorescent compound, for use in labeling and detecting any biotinylated compound.

71 (Original). The method, according to claim 63, further comprising the step of conjugating any peptide to the fluorescent compound, for use in homogeneous fluorescence polarization assays.

72-87 (Canceled).